

The Sky Line Trail



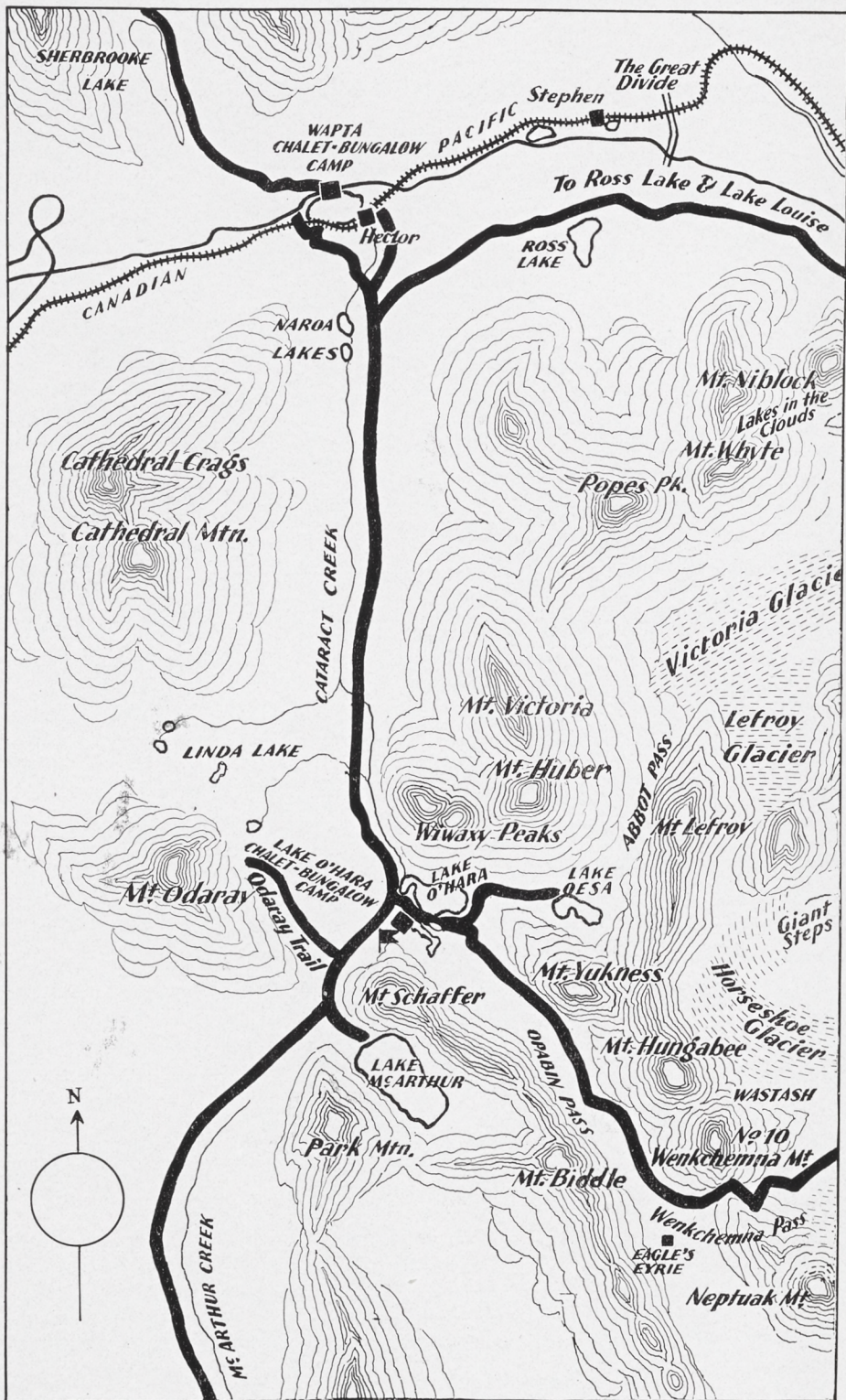
*Near Lake O'Hara: Looking back from the Oesa Trail.
Photo by Maurice Kellermann.*

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*Official Organ of the
Sky Line Trail Hikers
of the Canadian Rockies.*

Printed in Canada.



Trails for Sky Line Hikers round Lake O'Hara.



A morning's catch at Lake O'Hara.

Photo by R. H. Palenske.

SKY LINE TRAIL HIKE PLANS

The organized Sky Line Trail Hikes arranged for next Summer, August 7th to 10th, will be based on one central Camp at Lake O'Hara in order to avoid the cost of changing camp every night, which last year proved rather heavy. Through the extension of the Oday Bench Trail and the improvement of the trail to Opabin Meadows, Lake O'Hara offers an attractive variety of hiking trails, and is itself one of the most beautiful lakes in the Canadian Rockies. Opabin Meadow is particularly rich in Alpine flowers, and the whole region offers unusual opportunities for the Nature lover. As our illustrations on the front cover and pages 8 and 9, the scenery is highly spectacular, so don't forget your camera. The lake is well stocked with trout. Campfire singing will be held each evening with Harold Eustace Key as song leader. By arrangement with the General Manager of Canadian Pacific Hotels, we shall have the advantage of having our meals prepared and served from the Central Chalet, and for accommodation our members will have the choice of either sleeping in the Bungalow Camp, or in

a tent camp set up by the Brewster Transport Company, which will be close by. The number of beds available in the Bungalow Camp is limited, as a percentage of the accommodation must be reserved for the regular guests, but there will be lots of room in the tent camp and at a slightly lower price. The rates quoted include the cost of packing duffle bags from Wapta Station or Wapta Bungalow Camp to Lake O'Hara and return, and are as follows:—

Accommodation and meals (including lunch August 7th, and lunch August 10th) at Bungalow Camp, two or three in a cabin or room	\$22.50
— in Tent Camp	\$20.00

Please send your reservations as early as possible to the Secretary Treasurer.

SKY LINE TRAIL HIKERS

Room 318 Windsor Station,
Montreal

or to

Dan McCowan
Banff, Alberta.

The Sky-Line Trail of 1935

by Edna Jaques

Edna Jaques is a well known Canadian poetress who at present resides in Victoria, B.C. Before she started on the hike, she stated frankly that she preferred riding. In this account she seems to have forgotten that at one point on the hike, she became so absorbed in writing poetry that she got lost. So did some others who were not writing poetry. But she has written a wonderful story which we all will enjoy reading.

The dear knows I'm used to ski-lines, I've been seeing them all my life. There were long empty years when sky-lines were about all we did see, a little cluster of new buildings, stark on the face of the prairies, bare and brown as tumble-weed and far off from us . . . the edge of the world.

In the spring the wide horizons would glimmer through a mist of sunlight and quivering mirage, in the fall they would take on a purple tone like the sheen of new grapes, and in winter it was frost white, dazzling and shining in the sun, until your eyes ached with its glory, and old timers went snow-blind from the white glare of winter trails and stumbled on behind their creaking sleighs and loads of wheat, pain eating at their eye balls until they staggered like drunken men.

But these sky-lines were different. No peaceful flat fields here, no broad fertile acres, basking in the noonday heat. Here the sections of land stood on end, shoulder high to each other cater-corner, rearing their gaunt faces into the teeth of the wind, their edges scarred and worn like the weather-beaten cheeks of old fishermen, snow-clad, sullen, hating to be conquered by little trails, or disturbed by the tramping feet of men.

Who were we to dare their fastness, to brave their storms, to send echoes of our small laughter into their stillness, to tread the rich heather underfoot until it stained our rough shoes and lay bruised against the short grass, making a red trail across the high meadow land, into the country beyond.

There were forty of us, gathered from forty different altitudes, latitudes and longitudes, forty different ways of saying 'hello' forty ways of laughing, talking, grouching, cursing the trail, loving its challenge, breasting its wind and rain, enjoying the thin high air, drinking deep of the out-of-doors, letting its glory seep into our hearts and souls, to be taken out and tasted for years to come, by firesides, in kitchens and drawing-rooms, talked over proudly, gloated over like stored gold in the deep cellars of your heart and mind.

What a difference clothes can make in a person! The night before, I had seen some of our trail mates at the Banff Springs Hotel, attired in the swankiest of evening clothes, faultless in speech and manner. This morning they had shed their veneer, as a snake sheds its outworn skin, and here they were in the roughest of hob-nailed boots, old hats, old coats—the dirtier they were the prouder they seemed to be of them—baggy breeches, old pipes, old gloves, gay as prairie children on the First of July picnic, prodding each other playfully with the crooked end of their alpenstocks, telling jokes, singing . . . hitting the trail with glad, expectant feet.

Artists, writers, teachers, nurses, newspaper men, old . . . young—, and half way between, banded together for a little while, under the common bond of adventure, the lure of new trails, the thrill of freedom.

We had about twelve miles to make the first day, to Sunshine Camp. Well, it might have been twelve miles—as the crow flies, but we weren't crows, we were leg weary, plodding human beings with a ton weight on each foot, or so it seemed.

But it was good going, we pushed the miles behind us, walking became sort of automatic, you just kept on, and there was enough glory and wonder to satisfy the meanest man on earth.

Mt. Assiniboine gleamed like a rapier against the sky clear as a diamond . . . starkly beautiful.

Great peaks shone whitely in the sun, the air was heavy with the scent of cedar and pine, flowers carpeted the ground, little clear streams like jade came foaming down the mountain sides, flowing along the stony creek beds, dappled with sun and shade.

We had to kind of ford these, stepping from boulder to boulder, steadying ourselves with the sharp end of the alpenstock stuck into the mud and stones at the bottom, leaping over like mountain goats, and it was just too bad for you—if your alpenstock slipped.

And so we slugged on over hills and down dales, keeping close to the other fellow's heels.

I started with the first group—the young ones, in the morning—and at the end of the day I staggered into camp at the tail end of the old

*Sky Line on Simpson
Pass.*



Negotiating Healy Creek.



*Foot Bridge on Red Earth
Creek.*

*Scenes from the 1935
Sky Line Trail Hike.*

*Photos by
Carl Rungius.*

ones—and if they had strung out a mile farther back, well, I would have been back with them.

When I got into camp a little school-teacher from Banff brought me a bowl of hot tomato soup—and laid up for herself treasures in heaven.

How good the warm camp felt, after the trail! We lay around on the bunks, watching the guides getting supper, smelling the good fragrance of bacon and beans, watching the boys deftly setting the tables, hungrily eyeing every dish that was put on it.

We all ate like wolves. A little French lady from New York, whom I had seen the night before daintily sipping her coffee, now shamelessly drank three scalding cups of it, thick and rich with cream. I wondered how she kept her beautiful figure if this was the way she treated it, for she was slim as a ramrod and utterly charming.

A newspaper man from Chicago took pictures by holding the camera tight against his eye and shutting the other one. He got some very fine pictures of everyone but me, I'd break any camera-man's heart . . . just by being myself.

We left early in the morning for Egypt Lake, travelling 'Nor-West by Nor', as my father would say.

What a world of enchantment we were in now! We wandered knee-deep through wide alpine meadows gay with flowers of every color, columbine, forget-me-nots, dwarf dogwood, delicate ferns, bracken, lupins, paint brush, heather staining the very hillsides with its rich purple hue.

Color rich as Joseph's coat

Warm as firelight,

Shining through the fog and rain

For my heart's delight.

There was a lift to your heart, a tug at your throat, to see these ancient peaks snow crowned . . . unconquerable, here in this still peace, their summits swept by sudden fierce storms, solid as the Rock of Ages, grim as a fortress.

We were travelling over a high windy plateau now; walking was easy. You seemed to move on wings. Small streams of clear water trickled down the mountain side, little new-born things travelling softly without haste or hurry, just as they melted from the deep snows, they seemed uncertain of their bearings, starting out on their journey to the Sea, the mother of waters.

We slowly gained altitude, higher and higher, the now blazed trail took us up over the ridge until your heart stood still with the glory of it, the sweep of earth, the majesty.

Top of the world and the trail before you,

Wind in the tree tops clean as rain,

A snow-crowned peak and a glacier shining

Grass still wet where the mist had lain.

To the right of us Pharaoh's Peak pierced the clouds like a church spire, a sort of finger pointing us on.

I decided I wouldn't like to farm this country; land to me is divided in just two groups, the kind you can farm and the kind you can't. I see every bit of cleared ground as a potential potato patch, every sweep of meadow land, a future wheat field. But not up here. The Lord must have made this for an ornament, or a monument maybe, a land to be forever set aside, inaccessible, marvellous in His sight, a sanctuary for bird and beast, a vast holiday land where tired souls and bodies could come and rest amid the wonder of these snow crowned peaks.

Up over the top of the world we went, knapsacks, alpenstocks, goggles, cold cream and corns. Talking, laughing, the men boasting about fish, gold, shares, mileage and gas, making election bets, one man in his enthusiasm saying he'd walk around a city block in his night-shirt if Bennett lost. The women talking about their complexions, club programmes, operations, maids, children . . . movies and meals.

And so along these sweet virgin trails we brought our world with us; bathed in the reflected glory of sunset tinted glaciers we talked of little happenings in a little world . . . and yet, I know that sub-consciously, we drank in more than we thought; the sight of purple misted hills seeped into our veins and gave us strength. A clear cut peak, against a jade background of dawn, was etched forever in the secret places of our inner and better selves . . . the blue smoke from the camp fire, drifting lazily between spruce trees, set memories astir within us, a mountain goat outlined for a breathless moment against a white sweep of sky . . . was ours to keep forever.

A little English teacher had fashioned a flute from a bamboo reed and piped us over the hills with old English folk songs, and haunting airs. Even the staid sober folk stepped out gaily when she played a Hundred Pipers and A' and A' and toward the end of the day as we journeyed slowly down the steep hills to Shadow Lake, she brought her small flute out again and played softly into the purple twilight, "Maxwellton's braes are bonny" and we joined in the chorus sending the echoes over the quiet mountains and valleys, to mingle in the distance with the bells on the pack horses, silver clear in the empty dusk.

The bunk-house dim with lamp light, a full-stomached satisfied bunch of tired travellers perched around on hunks and boxes and up-turned kegs, the air dim with smoke and Wilf Carter singing his cow-boy songs, as only he can sing them. Red River Valley being first favorite, closely followed by The Last Round Up. It was



"A little English teacher had fashioned a flute from a bamboo reed, and piped us over the hills with old English folksongs and haunting airs.

From a pastel by Gordon Gillespie.

indeed the last round up for most of us, I guess.

From Shadow Lake we hiked down Redearth Valley, twelve miles to the motor road at Massive. The trail clung to the mountain sides; far, far below us the Redearth Creek foamed over white stones and shale; there was the smell of pine and bracken and fir. Every step was down hill until you'd think your toes would push through the front of your shoes, but they didn't.

Four days of climbing up and over the top of the world, of breathless heights, of warm sunny valleys, four days stolen from the busy tramp of life, wherein we tasted the thin clean air of virgin trails, of sudden new friendships, of good will to men.

And we brought back with us pictures we'll never forget, sights we'll talk about winter evenings when the neighbors come in, the taste of food flavored with camp fire smoke, the smell of coffee in the morning, the sight of the bus

waiting for us at Castle Mountain Camp . . . and we knew we'd get a ride home.

Pharaoh's Peak will shine for us against a background of moonlight sky, for years to come. When we want to imagine what heaven will be like (and that's about as close to heaven as most of us will ever get) we'll think of the flaming color of Shadow Lake, with the sun going down behind the trees.

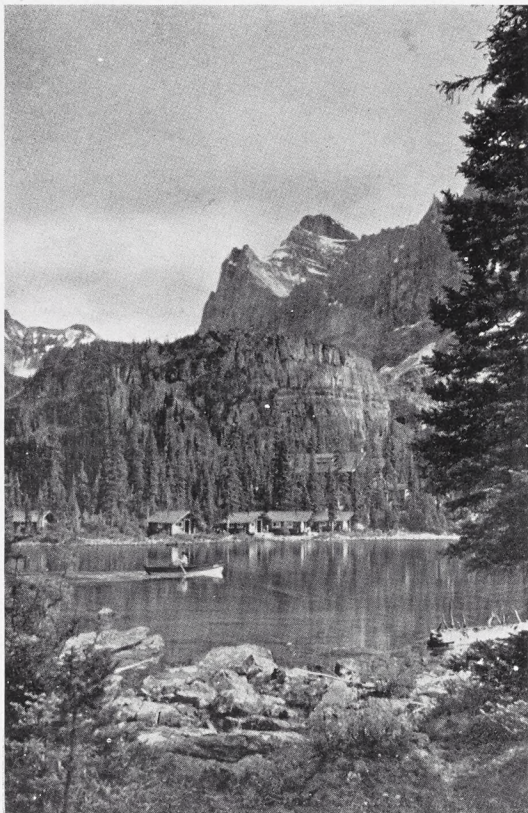
And oh to breathe the mountain air, the leaves of sage uncurled,

A thousand censers burning on the altar of the world,

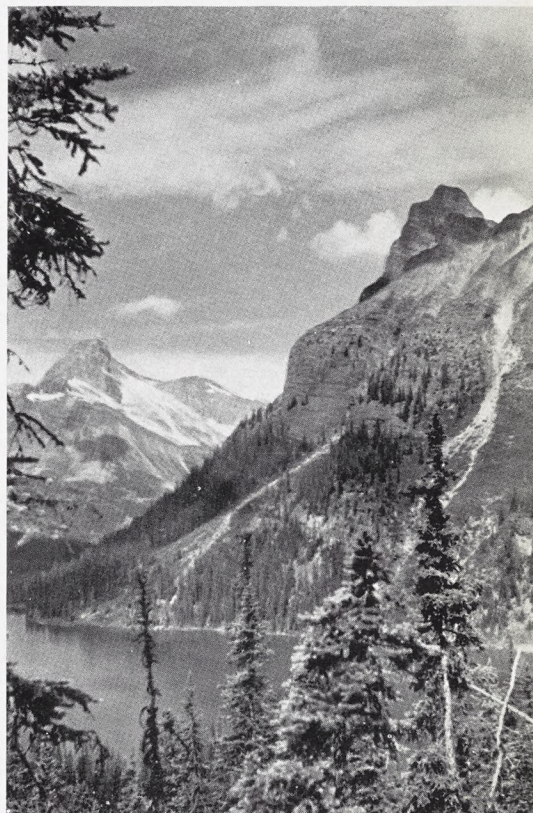
The cup of morning filled with wine, a sort of Holy Grail

And us . . . Crusaders of the dawn . . . along the Sky-Line Trail.

—Edna Jaques.



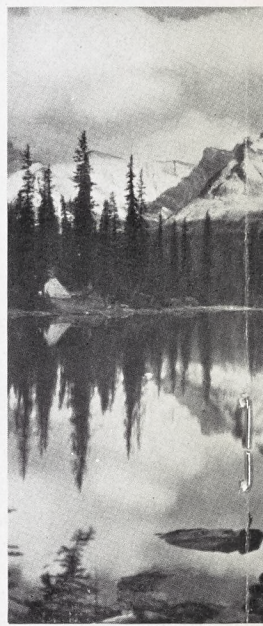
Lake O'Hara Chalet Bungalow Camp.



Waxy Mountain and Lake O'Hara.



On the trail near Lake O'Hara.



Reflection of Cathedral Mountain.



A helping hand on the Oesa Trail.



Lake McArthur.



Mountain in Lake O'Hara.



Looking back towards Cathedral Mountain from Odayay Bench.

Photos by Maurice Kellermann

Organised Wayfaring in Great Britain

by Tom S. Hall

Editor of the Scottish Ramblers' Year Book and principal of the Wayfaring Association of Great Britain.

We ourselves got the idea of organizing the Sky Line Hikers because we read and heard so much of the popularity of hiking in the Old Country. So in order to find out what exactly was happening over there, we asked the leading authority on the subject to send us this article.

In Great Britain there are more than 1000 Rambling Clubs the majority of which are affiliated to one or other of the Ramblers Federations. Each district in the country is controlled by a Federation, the management of which is in the hands of a Council representing all the Clubs in that area.

There is one Federation for Scotland; one for the London area and some 8 or 9 other Federations controlling the provinces of England. North Wales more or less comes under the wing of the Liverpool Ramblers Federation. There is no similar Organization for Ireland and at present the rights of the Ramblers are more or less catered for by the Youth Hostels Associations in that country. The objects of these Federations is to preserve the rights and privileges of Ramblers; to function as a Bureau of information with regard to foot-paths, roads, catering places and all matters of immediate interest to Ramblers; to secure adequate travelling facilities for Ramblers; to co-operate with kindred Societies in matters of mutual interest, and to secure and maintain public rights and access to moors and mountains. The various Ramblers Federations elect a representative to form the grand Council of the Ramblers Association, which controls the whole movement so far as Great Britain is concerned. The Youth Hostels are controlled by the various Youth Hostels Associations and is separate from the work of the Ramblers' Federations, which how-

ever are affiliated to and have seats on the management Committees of the Youth Hostels Associations.

The growth and development of the Youth

Hostel Movement is indeed phenomenal, and has developed with far greater rapidity than the organized Club Movement. Somehow, the appeal of the Federations to individual ramblers has never been great, possibly because would be subscribers are asked to pay a subscription appearing without anything tangible in return. The Youth Hostels Movement, however, offers something real for the annual subscription of a few shillings. After only a few years of life the Youth Hostels Movement at present controls some hundreds of Hostels scattered throughout the four corners of the Kingdom.



Tom S. Hall and his hiking son.

In the beginning, pioneers of this work visualized one Association for the whole of Great Britain and the original title of the English Y.H.A. had that in mind. It was necessary, however, to change the title as separate Organizations sprang up for Scotland, The Irish Free State, and Northern Ireland.

In Scotland, the Rucksack Club was formed with the object of becoming the Scottish Section of the Y.H.A. This plan fell through and in course of time the Rucksack Club was taken over by the Scottish Y.H.A. Later the Irish Y.H.A. was formed and from that sprang the Youth Hostels Association of Northern Ireland.

*Alpine
Flowers
in the*



*Canadian
Rockies*

Dan McCowan discovers a new variety which he names Fagendus Cigaretus



White Mocassin (Cypripedium passerinum)



Red Indian Paint Brush (Castilleja coccinea)



Daisy Fleabane (Erigeron strigosus)

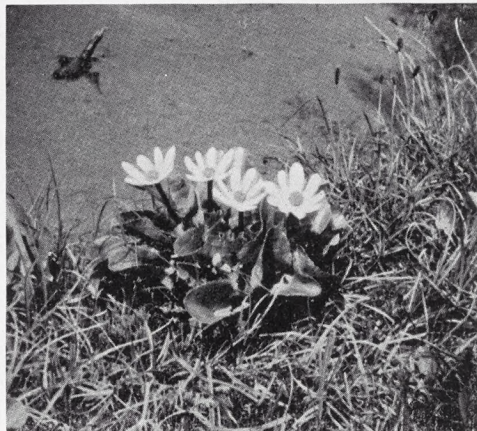


Globe Flower (Trollius laxus var. albiflorum)

Photos by L. Turbayne



Canada Violet (Viola Canadensis)



Marsh Marigold (Caltha leptosepala)



Gaillardia Aristata



Purple Aster (Aster Conspicuus)



Mountain Rhododendron (Rhododendron albiflorum)



Bunchberry (Cornus Canadensis)

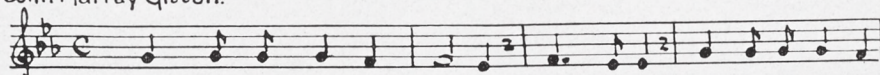
Photos by L. Turbayne



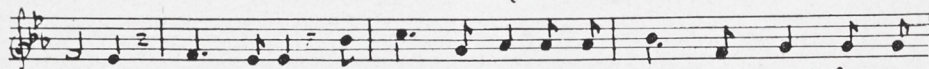
Lake Louise

(Tune - "Think on Me" Lady John Scott)

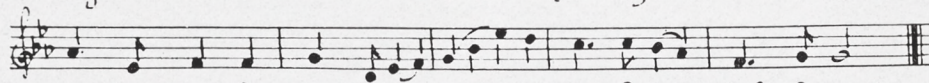
by John Murray Gibbon.



Throned in an Alpine eyrie Lake Louise! Reigns like a Queen of
 Lo! in her cool Dom- in- ion Lake Louise! Kilt- ed on snow- y
 Dawn with the ru- by fin- gers Lake Louise! Winters the night that



faery. Lake Louise! In sweet surrender To stars that lend her, And
 pinion. Lake Louise! Enchantment choosing Her spell' diff' us- ing The
 fingers. Lake Louise! The charm fulfill- ing New grace in- still- ing New



sapphires lend her. Lake Louise! Lake, O Lake Louise! Lake Louise!
 world be- mus- ing Lake Louise! Lake, O Lake Louise! Lake Louise!
 jew- els spill- ing Lake Louise! Lake, O Lake Louise! Lake Louise!



Union Pacific Railroad Photo.

ACROSS THE BORDER

Hiking Party starting out from Paradise Inn, Mount Rainier National Park.

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